



WIRELESS

The Electronic Newsletter of WEFT Champaign, Community Radio for East Central Illinois
Issue 2015-1 March 2015

Prairie Air, Incorporated Board of Directors:

Vicki Niswander, Chair, vniswander@gmail.com
Todd Hunter, Vice-Chair
Connie Hosier, Secretary
Don Davis, Treasurer
Andrew Cardinal, Director
Mark Niswander, Director
Barb Trumpinski –Roberts, Director
Al Kurtz, Director

WEFT Website: <http://weft.org>

Lori Serb, Station Manager, stationmanager@weft.org
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Board Chair's Message

By Vicki Niswander

January Board Meeting Update

The Board of Prairie Air, Inc. met on January 26. New airshifter trainee Al Kurtz has declared his intent to run for a seat on the WEFT Board of Directors. The election took place at the regular Board meeting on Monday February 23. (See below.) The seat is a vacant board-elected position. The member election will take place in June. There are four open seats to be filled. The board is in great need of strong board members. We encourage our members to consider running for a position. Brian Zelip is leaving the board as he and his family are moving to the Baltimore area this spring.



Board officer elections were held at the January meeting. All officers remain the same for this year: Vicki Niswander as Chair, Todd Hunter, Vice-Chair, Connie Hosier, Secretary, and Don Davis, Treasurer.

Dates have been set for the Spring Pledge Drive. The drive will run from Sunday, March 29 through Sunday April 19 unless we fall short of our goal of \$40,000. We have raised the goal due to the shortfall we are experiencing with the loss of funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

Pledge drive training took place prior to the regular quarterly associates meeting on Thursday March 5 at 6 pm. Food and drink was provided. Pledge drive training is required of all airshiffters. Training on March 5 was the first of three possible options for training, with one option being online. There will be a third training a week prior to the start of pledge drive. Dates will be announced later.

There was discussion about the functioning of the transmitter. Bruce Zimmerman updated the board on the status of the transmitter, emphasizing the importance of replacing one of our four power supplies. We are currently running only three which will put undue stress on the remaining units. We are able to purchase a rebuilt unit for \$3,000, with a new unit costing about \$5,000.

There was additional discussion about replacing the front door lock at WEFT due to security concerns. A keypad lock was considered, to remove the need for keys to be issued. Now there is a single code given to all current airshiffters, which may change if there is a need. The lock on the South door will be rekeyed. Board Members Andrew Cardinal and Don Davis got additional estimates for cost of a unit plus installation.

Executive Committee Update

The Executive Committee approved both the purchase of a rebuilt power supply and front door lock for WEFT at a special meeting on February 13. Thanks to an anonymous donor, \$750 toward the new lock will be paid, leaving about \$200 expense to WEFT.

Pledge Drive Committee

The newly formed Spring Pledge Drive Committee has met twice in recent weeks. Members include Board members, Vicki Niswander, Todd Hunter, Andrew Cardinal, Mark Niswander, Barb Trumpinski – Roberts, Connie Hosier and Don Davis. Also participating are Bruce Zimmerman, Jeff Machota, Ed Hadley, Dave Witzany, Al Kurtz, Bill Saylor, Anthony Brooks, Lorri Coey and Station Manager, Lori Serb. The next meeting of the committee will be on the WEFT website. All are encouraged to attend.

February Board Meeting Update

The February Board meeting began with the election of a new board member and airshifter, Alan Kurtz. Al will be joining the board officially for the next board meeting on March 23. Al is the former chair of the Champaign County Board, and is doing a public affairs program, *Community Chat with Big Al*, alternating Wednesdays from 8-9pm.

The board also discussed the upcoming Spring Pledge Drive. Mandatory Pledge Drive training for all airshiffters will be set on a two dates. The first will be in conjunction with the Associates meeting on March 5. A second training will be available online on Sunday, March 22 at 2pm. The training will be about an hour long.

Pledge Drive begins on March 29 with a goal of 500 pledges. Airshiffters are expected to volunteer to either co-host or answer phones for two shows in addition to their own for each week of the drive.

The board reports included an update from the Executive Committee who approved the purchase of a rebuilt power supply for the transmitter, and a new keypad lock for the front door. All keys are now unusable, so if you have one, please turn it in to the station manager.



Board members seen at work in picture (clockwise) Todd Hunter, Don Davis, Connie Hosier, Vicki Niswander, Barb Trumpinski-Roberts, Mark Niswander and the back of Andrew Cardinal’s head. (Photos: Bob Selby)



The Board takes a break to pose for picture 2. In the front Row from left to right are Connie Hosier, Vicki Niswander, Alan Kurtz, Barb Trumpinski-Roberts. In the back row are Mark Niswander, Don Davis, Andrew Cardinal, Lori Serb and Todd Hunter.

Station Manager’s Message

By Lori Serb

Get Your WEFT On!

WEFT has been a terrestrial radio station since 1981. WEFT began webcasting in 2007. WEFT contributes to artist royalties through both of these avenues. A snapshot of recent programming includes a live set by electric blues guitarist Cash McCall, a wedding officiated in the studio on air, and the world premiere of a previously unknown and unheard recording of a 1964 speech given in London by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These in addition to locally produced weekly public affairs programs like Disability Beat, The Prairie Monk and Smile Politely Radio distinguish WEFT from anything else on the radio dial.



The WEFT program grid (see last page) is voted on by a group of elected members that make up the Programming Committee. Our foundation building blocks of Jazz, Blues and World music each make up at least 15 hours of programming a week but each program is created by an individual producer called an airshifter who has wisdom, experience and passion that influences their choices of material from a wide variety of sources to make each program very distinct from another in the same genre. WEFT’s diverse programming schedule would not be possible if the station was part of a media conglomerate that dictates programming from the top down.

I accepted the Station Manager position on July 1st 2014 after being an active volunteer for 17 years. I was originally drawn to WEFT’s unique soundscape and driven by a desire to contribute to the public

affairs and music programming offered. In the process, I have expanded my knowledge of the local community and the global community I am part of.

WEFT has a modest operating budget of \$110,753.

Finding new sources of funding for our basic operating expenses is a top priority as WEFT moves forward in a new era without 60% of our budget coming from one grant. WEFT is a part of a growing number of Community Radio stations that no longer receives money from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting due to their modified requirements that stations raise a non-federal income level of \$300,000 to be eligible for \$71,000 from the CPB. While we received a grant from the Illinois Arts Council last year, applicants this year were recently informed that there will be less money available for FY2016 awards.

In October WEFT began to have transmitter trouble. On October 26th suddenly our transmitter failed and WEFT was off the air. The station's transmitter, replaced in 2008, was assessed by volunteers and the decision was made to purchase two essential circuit boards costing \$2000. WEFT was back on the air the evening of Halloween.



Photo by Bruce Zimmerman shows the two bay directional transmission FM antenna on the transmitter tower.



Photo by Lori Serb shows the station to transmitter link (STL) receiver on WEFT's broadcast tower, a gold parabolic grid antenna.

Then again in November we went off the air due to different equipment failing in the broadcasting chain to the transmitter. We were able get our signal back on the air but more problems in the broadcasting chain and at the transmitter were identified including a need to improve on the cooling system. Our Power to the Tower campaign began in December and so far has raised \$13,000.

To illustrate that WEFT community radio is truly powered by the people; listeners who contribute to the Power to the Tower campaign are being recognized by name on our website. This month we were able to use a large portion of that money raised to purchase one of the four power supply units that need to be replaced. When the weather warms up we will need to repair the transmitter de-icer; the damaged area could be anywhere up to 325 feet up the antenna. Back on the ground the 10kW transmitter which requires large amounts of electrical power generates a lot of heat which is taxing the room's current cooling system.

Listener Supported / Volunteer Operated

WEFT will kick off our Spring Pledge Drive on March 29th. While we had many discussions we ultimately decided to keep the annual membership at \$40. To meet our budget without the CPB grant WEFT needs 733 financial contributions from listeners at our Frequency Level of \$90.10. We need to double our Community Partner pool of local businesses that underwrite programming. We are exploring other financial possibilities in The Center for Car Donations program, grants and fundraising events.

Boneyard Arts Festival

WEFT will be a venue participating in the 13th Annual Boneyard Arts Festival with scheduled tours of the station on Friday, April 10th & Saturday, April 11th. WEFT will be in our second week of our Spring Pledge Drive and I see the tours as an opportunity to meet many of our supporters in person and for them to share their fondest WEFT memories. More details will be available soon.

WEFT's 24/7 artistic contributions are enjoyed by the ears, but during the 13th Annual Boneyard Arts Festival weekend visitors to WEFT can indulge in the visual artistry of WEFT. We will have a lot of memorabilia on display around the station from our 34 years of broadcasting, including original pieces by local artist and longtime airshifter Edwin Hadley aka Edli B'n Hadd. He is the host of "Incoming Wounded" presenting experimental soundscapes to the airwaves every Sunday 12am until 5am. If you have been a financial supporter of WEFT over the years you probably own at least one of his memorable WEFT t-shirts.

Our other featured artist is WEFT Courier host Doug Olive. Every third Saturday from 1-2pm Doug takes a look at political theory and its sociology during "Speaking of Democracy." As a visual artist, Doug is inspired by landscapes and works with acrylic and pastels and will also be displaying some of his photography at the station.

Many art pieces including some retro WEFT t-shirts will be available for purchase with a portion of all proceeds going directly to WEFT's basic operating expenses.

While WEFT is currently focused on the immediate future and reflecting on how far we have come I would very much like WEFT to move forward in the direction of making our quality programming accessible anytime through podcasts. I would like to renovate our back studio to allow for more on site radio production and training capabilities for the community and developing a local newsroom to better serve our local listening community. I hope our listeners will join me in rolling up our sleeves giving time, money and skills in making these dreams a reality.

Associate Executive Committee Chair's Message

By Mike Feldman

The WEFT Associates meet four times a year per the WEFT bylaws. For the March 2015 meeting we did things a bit differently than in the past. We started a half hour earlier than usual, enjoyed pizza, veggies and dip, and had an hour of training for the upcoming Spring Pledge Drive.

Vicki Niswander, our Board of Directors chair, presented the training and asked that all WEFT airshiffters sign up to co-host or man the phones for two other shows besides their own. There was some good discussion about using social media to support fund raising.



The normal business meeting started after the pledge drive training. We heard reports from Lori Serb, our station manager, and from Programming, Music and Digital Library committees.

A main order of business is elections. Britta Langsjoen was acclaimed a new member of the Programming Committee. All of the current Associates Executive Committee members stood for re-election and were returned to office. Board of Directors members Barbara Trumpinski-Roberts and Mark Niswander had their terms expiring, and both were re-elected.

The next quarterly WEFT Associates meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015 at the Urbana Civic Center.



Photos: Bob Selby

Airshifter Artists Featured at Boneyard Arts Fest

By Bob Selby

Edwin Hadley

Ask Edwin Hadley to describe himself he says, "I'm a doodler since... forever. Townie since first grade. Graduate of Centennial High, SIU - Carbondale and Parkland College."

Ed's "Day job" is a Graphic designer (Research Specialists) in the Department of Entomology at the University of Illinois.

At WEFT he is host of InComing Wounded "pushing 34 years of strange behavior and no social life." He labels InComing Wounded as "all night inner eyelid escapades of non-aligned chaos designed to answer nothing and surreal-ize everything. And then there are the InComing Wounded, pausing to reflesh, float, and bloat away (size 7 large), evening dress not rehired. (In-action figures sold separately. Not seen on TV! Batteries often deluded.)"

About himself he says, "I'm a host who's not quite right (or left)."

A veteran host and artist at WEFT, Ed has designed art for WEFT for 33 plus years including WEFT program guides, posters, t-shirts, logos, and other WEFT projects. Ed has been a committee member of numerous WEFT committees at one time over the years.

Ed is founder and main protagonist of the "World Renowned" improvisational band, NoizAssembly. Operating since approximately 1999, NoizAssembly was started by a number of maladjusted cohorts with an odd dog collection of toys - broken, bent, and sometimes new. He says, "We are a bending of noiz and music to fit the local reality and the local reality is just plain bent." NoizAssembly has been called WEFT's "House Band."

Doug Olive

Doug grew up and was schooled in Decatur, Illinois, where he attended Millikin University, receiving a B.A. in Liberal Arts/History in 1971. After working as a farmer, factory worker, and public school teacher, he finally came to Champaign-Urbana thirty years ago and did editorial work for local publishers until he retired.

"My lifelong attraction to nature and photography eventually led me to try other art forms," said Doug. "While I still do photography, I now paint in acrylics and draw in pastels, and the subjects are usually landscapes."

Doug describes himself as self-taught, self-directed, and he uses his art work as an opportunity to study art history, which doubles the pleasure of the experience.



Sudden Sounds Concerts Supported by WEFT

By Jason Finkelman

Sudden Sound Concerts at Krannert Art Museum – Spring 2015

Presenting leading artists in improvised music and the jazz avant-grade at the University of Illinois since 2005, the Sudden Sound Concert Series at Krannert Art Museum celebrates its tenth anniversary with two groups rooted in east coast musical attitudes. The series opens on Thursday, March 19 at 7:30pm with a special reunion performance featuring progressive jazz veteran and poet Elliott Levin (right) on saxophones & flutes with Rick Iannacone on electric guitar, who together share decades of collaboration in Philadelphia-based groups including Interplay and New Ghost. Levin is a noted regular member of Cecil Taylor's Sound Vision Orchestra and Odean Pope's Saxophone Choir, while now Oregon-based Iannacone has recorded as a featured member of Jamaaledeen Tacuma's electric groups and projects by Bobby Zankel. Chicago-based drummer / percussionist Avreeayl Ra, noted for his work with AACM musicians, will be a featured special guest.



On Thursday, April 23 at 7:30pm the series continues with Gerald Cleaver's Black Host an improvising "super" quintet from New York City featuring Cooper-Moore (keyboards, synthesizer), Brandon Seabrook (guitar), Darius Jones (alto saxophone), Pascal Niggenkemper (bass) and Gerald Cleaver (drums). Their 2013 debut release *Life in the Sugar Candle Mines* (Northern Spy), was acclaimed by reviewers and noted by Ben Ratliff in the New York Times as "a possible dream band for anyone interested in the new intersections between jazz and rock, as long as you expel preconceptions of that idea."

Sudden Sound concerts are presented admission free at the Krannert Art Museum and Kinkead Pavilion, located at 500 East Peabody Drive in Champaign. The series is curated by Jason Finkelman, Director of Global Arts Performance Initiatives, and is sponsored in part by Edwards Foundation Arts Fund, MMS Rentals & Production, Analog Outfitters and Krannert Art Museum with in-kind support provided by WEFT, 90.1 FM.

AIRSHIFTER PROFILE: JEFF MACHOTA

By Bob Selby

Jeff, how long have you been at WEFT?

I started in July of 1991, so I've been on the air, what? going on 24 years.

What attracted you to do a show on WEFT?

Nature's Table had just been shut down and I wanted to do a jazz show on WEFT. (Nature's Table was a whole-food restaurant and a live music venue. They featured jazz groups in Urbana from 1979 until May, 1991.)



When are you on the air?

I'm on every Wednesday from 9:00 to 11:30 A.M. When the show began I was on from 9:00 until noon. My show is the longest running jazz show on WEFT

Please describe your program for the benefit of those who may not have heard you yet.

I call my show the Wednesday Morning Prayer Meeting. I'm a big Charles Mingus fan so I adopted and modified the name of one of his tunes: Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting.

On the WEFT web site I describe my show this way: "Jazz from the roots, music to hit you in your soul. From the past and the present, with an ear to the future. Experience jazz as a living art form." I play the classics of hard-bop and post-bop, as well as the best of new releases every week.

What talents, experiences, expertise and/or resources do you have that help you to do your program?

I would say my long history in the local jazz scene. I worked at Nature's Table for six years. I booked (scheduled) jazz (talent) at Zorba's (Restaurant in Campustown), the Blind Pig (now the Cowboy Monkey) and other places. I read Downbeat Magazine and Jazz Times to keep up on the national scene and new releases. Also, I frequent local jazz clubs to keep current on what's happening today...and because I love to go out and support live music in Champaign-Urbana.

What is your "day job?" What do you do when you're not on the air?

I manage books and accounts for a few local organizations and one national non-profit.

NEW AIRSHIFTER PROFILE: AL KURTZ

By Bob Selby

You're a new airshifter; when did you start your program?

I started on Wednesday, February 11th. Before that I subbed for two shows in January. My guests have been Bruce Hannon discussing the Mahomet Aquifer; Sheriff Dan Walsh discussing the jail, Tasers, body cameras; and Stan Jenkins, County Assessor discussing property taxes.

Wednesday, February 25, I had Alan Nudo and Dan McCollum discussing the New Central High school location and the marketing and expansion of Willard airport. (See below.)



What attracted you to do a show on WEFT?

I have been interviewed a number of times and have enjoyed the experience. Now *I* get a chance to DO the interviewing.

When are you on the air?

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 8:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Please describe your program for the benefit of those who may not have heard you yet.

It's called Big Al's Community Chat. We discuss politics, business, agriculture, and other current local topics.

What talents, experiences, expertise and/or resources do you have that help you to do your program?

I spent 22 years in retail corporate America. I am the past President of the Champaign County Humane society, a franchise owner of Blimpie subs for 11 years, six years on the Champaign County Board. I was the Chief Elected official and Chairman of the Champaign County Board. I have been a board member and chair of six other local boards.

What is (or was) your “day job?” What do you do when you’re not on the air?

I am retired now so I can spend more time planning my show, scheduling my guests and being active on the Prairie Air, Inc. Board of Directors.

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday					
6 AM	MORNING MENU MIXED MUSIC AND INFORMATION					FREEFORM	GOSPEL	6 AM				
7 AM												7 AM
8 AM											AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMENTARY	
9 AM	JAZZ JAM					NEWSCOMMENTARY	INSPIRATIONAL	9 AM				
10 AM										LABOR ISSUES	ENVIRONMENTAL	10 AM
11 AM											MUSIC OF INDIA	11 AM
12 PM	THE BLUES					PUBLIC AFFAIRS COLLECTIVE	WOMYN'S MUSIC	12 PM				
1 PM										GLOBAL PSYCHEDELIC	ALT. RADIO	1 PM
2 PM												2 PM
3 PM	THE BEAT BLENDER: WORLD BEAT & OTHER RHYTHMS					SURFABILLY	LOCAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS	3 PM				
4 PM	DEMOCRACY NOW!							4 PM				
5 PM	THE WEFT COURIER: NEWS & FEATURES					OLD TIME COUNTRY	NEWS & VIEWS	5 PM				
6 PM	DISABILITY BEAT	SIERRA CLUB RADIO	COUNTERSPIN	THIS WAY OUT	SMILE POLITELY			6 PM				
7 PM	NEWS/ISSUES	FOLK COUNTRY BLUEGRASS	NEWS/COMMENTARY	ALTERNATIVE COUNTRY	HIP HOP		CELTIC	7 PM				
8 PM	RADIO THEATRE						8 PM					
9 PM	MONDAY NIGHT RnR	JAZZ	NEWS/VIEWS ALTERNATING DJ	REGGAE	BLUES LIVE	GRATEFUL DEAD	AMBIENT EXPERIMENTAL	9 PM				
10 PM	LIVE LOCAL MUSIC					THE VAULT: LIVE MUSIC		10 PM				
11 PM	LOCAL MUSIC	EAST of ZERO	WOMEN'S ROCK	SINGER-SONGWRITER	LOUNGE MUSIC	DIGITAL & DUSTED	GOTHIC	11 PM				
12 AM								12 AM				
1 AM	TIME CAPSULE	INDUSTRIAL EBM/POWER	ROCK/GOTH PUNK INDUSTRIAL	FREEFORM	ROCK OBSCURE INDEPENDENT	AMBIENT TECHNO EXPERIMENTAL	FREEFORM	1 AM				
2 AM	INDUSTRIAL · GOTH · ECLECTIC · INDIE ROCK · R & B · FREEFORM							2 AM				
6 AM								6 AM				

CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

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Bob Selby, Editor

